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A BIRTH-DAY PRESENT;

OR,

NINE DAYS CONVERSATION

BETWEEN A

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER,

ON

INTERESTING SUBJECTS:

FOR THE

USE OF YOUNG PERSONS, FROM TEN TO FOURTEEN YEARS OF AGE.

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1788.

TO

MISS _____

THIS

BIRTH-DAY PRESENT

IS OFFERED

BY HER VERY AFFECTIONATE MOTHER.

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A BIRTH-

A

BIRTH-DAY PRESENT.

FIRST DAY's CONVERSATION.

HAPPINESS.

MAMA *meeting* MARY.

Mama. MY dear girl, come to me!—receive the embraces and tendereſt wiſhes of a mother——To-day, you know, is your Birth-day.

Mary. Mama—I was juſt coming to thank you for your kindneſs.—My ſiſter ſays you have been ſo good to invite a party of my young friends, to viſit me this afternoon; and that you have provided a little entertainment of cakes and fruit for us. I am very much obliged to you.

Mama. My dear—I rejoice in every opportunity of giving you pleaſure ; and I am very glad to perceive, by your countenance, that this little ſcheme gratifies you ſo much—but, I will not pretend to be ſo totally diſintereſted, as not to hope for ſome return on your part—and while I allotted the afternoon for your amuſement among your ſchool-fellows, I flattered myſelf that you would beſtow the morning upon me.

I wiſh to have a good deal of converſation with you—therefore ſit down, my dear, put aſide, for a while, the thoughts of your diverſions and gaieties, and give me your ſerious attention.

You are this day, my dear, —— years old; an age at which, though you are ſtill a child, yet every thing you do becomes of conſequence—every moment becomes precious.

It is the privilege of infancy, to ſport and frolick about careleſsly, and at random ; innocence

innocence, and good-humour, are the only recommendations they need, and they find in their own health and gaiety, a conſtant ſource of enjoyment.

But—when young people leave that ſtate, and become capable of more refined, and enlarged pleaſure, different qualifications are expected from them, and a different conduct is neceſſary for their own enjoyment. The pleaſures of the mind muſt be added to thoſe of the body—in order to make them as happy as they are capable of being. Their different ſtudies and occupations will receive their higheſt reliſh, by the reflection, that they are doing that which is right and proper for them to do; and every amuſement and gratification that is allowed them, will be enhanced, by receiving it as a teſtimony of their friends' kindneſs and eſteem.

That curioſity which diſcovers itſelf ſo early—and is at firſt indulged only as a means of diverſion, may now be made a

guide to knowledge, and be employed in enquiries into nature and art, which may be continually opening freſh ſources of delight and wonder for their young minds.

At your age—not a minute can be waſted, without taking ſo much from the ſtock of happineſs intended for you. The time that is ſuffered to remain idle is loſt—

From gaining knowledge.

From diſcharging your duty.

From improving your virtue.

From giving joy to your friends.

From ſerving your God.

After ſome years are paſt, you will make your appearance in the world as a young woman. You are very ready, I dare ſay, to ſuppoſe, that, in *that character*, much more will be required from you, than as a child: I know you think ſo, by the obſervations

vations you ſometimes make to me, on young ladies who are grown up.

Mary. I confeſs I do, Madam—a great deal more ſeems to be expected of a young woman, than of a child.

Mama. And how, Mary, is that expectation to be fulfilled?

You do not imagine any wonderful charm, that is to take place in a young perſon at ſixteen or ſeventeen, which ſhall preſent her to the world, polite, well inſtructed, ingenious, and agreeable, if her childhood has been negligent, idle, and ignorant.

Knowledge and accompliſhments are obtained by a regular progreſs; by doing a little every day, in ſome years you will find a great deal done, and will be able to reward the labours of your friends, at the time that your improvements will be a credit to yourſelf and them; and it depends upon your manner of ſpending your time *now*,

whether they are to be ſo, or not: beſides, your coming into the world with the character you would wiſh, is more connected with your preſent deportment than you may imagine.

People, though not diſpoſed to be ſevere to children, are naturally led to form a judgment from a child's conduct, what they will be when they grow up; you will, therefore, in a great meaſure, fix the opinion which perſons will have of you hereafter, by your behaviour now; and ſome time hence, when you are of an age to viſit, or be taken notice of, thoſe who have daughters, and young friends, will court or avoid your acquaintance, according to the obſervations they have made of your conduct in your more youthful years.

Mary. Yes, Mama—I heard Mrs. Cenſor ſay of a young lady, the other day, that ſhe hoped her daughter would never form an intimacy with her; for that ſhe had always

ways been ſo idle and headſtrong a child, that ſhe was ſure ſhe could never prove good for any thing, but would always be an occaſion of vexation and ſhame to her friends.

Mama. God forbid that ſhould ever be ſaid of you !—it makes a mother tremble, but to hear of it; and I think Mrs. Cenſor had much better have given her advice to her daughter in private, than have expoſed this unfortunate young woman in a company where ſhe was almoſt a ſtranger: but you may ſee by that, how little cautious people are in giving their opinion, and to how wide a circle the knowledge of theſe faults may ſpread, which you think have been ſcarce obſerved at all, or ſeen but by a very few.

The character given of this young lady, whoſe name ſhe publicly mentioned, though you have very prudently ſuppreſſed it, was heard by ten people; theſe ten people ſepa-

rate,

rate, and, whenever this lady is mentioned, ſpread through the circle of their acquaintance this account of her: they do the ſame; ſo that before ſhe is ſeen or known, every body is prejudiced againſt her. I do not juſtify the conduct of thoſe who ſpeak ſo freely and unkindly; but it ought to make young perſons very careful, that they do not give the leaſt ground for ſuch reflections.

Mary. I hope I ſhall not; pray, Mama, tell me of every thing you ſee amiſs in me, that I may make haſte to correct it.

Mama. My child, with ſuch a diſpoſition you can never do wrong. What I have ſaid has been to convince you, of how much conſequence it is, in every reſpect, to improve your time to uſeful and virtuous purpoſes; not only that you may enjoy yourſelf at preſent, but be *hereafter* in the ſituation you would wiſh to be.

No ſcheme can be well executed, nothing can be done to purpoſe, without our firſt forming a plan, and conſidering what it is we aim at, and what means it will be beſt for us to purſue.

If you are chuſing any road, you conſider whether it be ſafe and pleaſant, and whither it will conduct you at laſt.

Now, that the road of life is before you, and the greateſt part of it yet untried, caſt your eyes a little forward; and, in the journey you are to take, reflect what is the end you aim at, and what path you are to take to arrive at it.

You ſee all the world in a buſtle—what do you think they are purſuing?

Mary. Many different things, I ſuppoſe, according to their different diſpoſitions.

Mama. Many different things they are indeed purſuing!—but they have all in view one object—that is, Happineſs.

Happineſs

Happineſs is ſought by all; but the various methods which men take to obtain it, and the frequent diſappointments they meet with, ſhew that the world is ſtrangely miſtaken about it. The greater part do not conſider what Happineſs is, nor how it is to be acquired; but, having fixed their minds on ſome particular thing, they think they cannot be happy without *that*; they ſeek it as the means of happineſs, and are diſappointed either by their not obtaining the thing, or by finding it inſufficient to the purpoſe for which they deſired it—that of making them happy. This caſts a gloom over their minds; they refuſe to ſtretch out their hands to the enjoyments that are within their reach, becauſe they cannot graſp at thoſe that are beyond it:—thus they remain diſſatisfied and indolent, till ſome other object ſtarts up before them, from the attainment of which, they hope for Happineſs. They ſeek it with an ardor proportionable to the value they ſet upon it; and, in the eagerneſs of their purſuit, overlook

overlook all thoſe quiet and familiar pleaſures which are around them—as a man, who is running a race, haſtens to the goal, without regarding the beauties of the country through which he paſſes.

Whether they loſe or poſſeſs the object "on which they dote," they miſs of that "for which they dote," Happineſs; which depends not ſo much on any particular attainment, as on the general diſpoſition of the heart, and turn of the thoughts.

If you cultivate in yourſelf a pious, calm, chearful, and benevolent temper of mind, Happineſs will flow in upon you from a thouſand ſources; it will meet you in the path of duty, and join you in the innocent amuſements of life, without your going out of your way to ſeek it; and thoſe ingredients which are taſteleſs, or unpleaſant to others will make your cup overflow with joy.

Mary.

Mary. I remember the Sparkler in The Guardian ſays, "We ſhould endeavour to be eaſy here, and happy hereafter."

Mama. She does ſo; and in many reſpects it is very juſt. But there is even in this world "a joy which no man can take from us," and "a peace which paſſeth all underſtanding:" this joy and this peace can be found only where few are diſpoſed to look for it—in the diſcharge of our duty;—it is the gift of God, and is beſtowed only on thoſe who do his will. To be truly happy, you muſt be religious; religion is firſt requiſite to happineſs; and religion will incline you to ſuch a uniform temper of mind and general courſe of conduct, as will fit your heart for the reception of happineſs, from every channel through which it ſhall pleaſe God to convey it; which will be many more than thoſe are aware of, who ſuffer impetuous paſſions and evil habits to obſtruct its courſe.

What

What this temper and conduct may be, I wish to explain more at large to you. But I have almost tired your attention at present: go and take a turn in the garden,—and then make yourself ready for the reception of your friends in the afternoon. We will renew our conversation as we sit at work tomorrow morning;—and I hope to point out to you such a plan, as shall enable you to enjoy as much delight and comfort as can be had in this world;—and to heighten that enjoyment, by the prospect of much more abundant delight in another.

Mary. I am not at all wearied, Madam—but I fear I might not be able to remember a great deal more at once:—I will therefore go and walk in the garden, and endeavour to recollect all that you have said to me, and impress it upon my memory.

Mama. You may amuse yourself likewise by learning these Verses, which are not unsuitable to the subject we have been talking of:

O D E.

FANTASTIC Power! whoſe airy mien
Proclaims thee, Pleaſure—giddy Queen,
This paradox unfold:
Wherefore do all déclare thee vain,
Yet fondly labour to obtain
Thy ſtores of fancied gold?

Why, when, with unſucceſsful chace,
They oft' have try'd thy paths to trace,
By Deſtiny repell'd;
Why do they ſtill thy route purſue,
And why the vain attempts renew,
Where they ſo oft' have fail'd?

Say, by thy unſubſtantial ſide,
Indeed, does Happineſs reſide,
In gaudy ſplendor dreſt?
Muſt ſhe be ſought in Pleaſure's maze,
Nor look'd for in the ſilent ways
Of Solitude and Reſt?

Fond Man, alas! with paſſion fraught,
By Fancy's wild chimæras taught,
Seeks her in Beauty's ſmile;
Dreams that ſhe dwells 'midſt Pomp and Shew,
Or ſits upon the lofty brow
Of bold Ambition's hill.

" Deluſions all!—but thou, my Soul,"
Submit to Reaſon's juſt controul—
Attend Religion's lore;
Guided by her unerring rays,
With grateful awe the wond'rous ways
Of Love divine explore.

Tho' in her train no Cupids play,
Nor Flora, in her ſober way,
Profuſe her flow'rets ſhed;
Fair Peace ſhall in her ſteps attend,
And Heav'n its choiceſt bleſſings ſend
Where'er ſhe deigns to tread.

Second Day's Converſation.

CHEARFULNESS.

MAMA *and* MARY *at work.*

Mama. I BELIEVE, Mary, your viſitors were very well pleaſed, by what I heard of their mirth when I was abſent :— their politeneſs reſtrained the exuberance of their gaiety while I was in the room.

Mary. Indeed, Mama, we were all in high ſpirits, and our mirth was not always of the quieteſt kind ;—but ſtill, in the midſt of our merriment, I could not help thinking, that the pleaſure we enjoyed did not anſwer the idea you had given me of happineſs in the morning. We were diverted ; —but ſomething more ſeemed wanting to make one truly happy.

Mama.

Mama. I am pleaſed that you ſo well unſtand what I ſaid to you ;—and I hope to aſſiſt you in laying a much more ſolid foundation for happineſs, than the tranſient overflow of mirth and ſpirits. What was wanting to you was, the pleaſure of reflection :—your enjoyment would not bear a cool and deliberate review :—there was nothing expreſsly wrong in it,—but there was nothing to look back to with any ſatisfaction.

If you have been entertained with a book, an agreeable piece of work, or any amuſement of that ſort, it is a pleaſure to you to recollect what you have read or done ;—you approve yourſelf while you are doing it, and are glad afterwards, that you have been ſo uſefully employed :—but it gives you no particular pleaſure to day, to remember that you have laughed and jumped about ſo much yeſterday.

Mary. My dear Mama ! I feel the force of what you ſay ;—but I hope you do not

ſeverely condemn the giddineſs of my play yeſterday, as I was led into it by a deſire of making the afternoon paſs chearfully and agreeably to my friends.

Mama. I am not diſpoſed to be ſevere upon you at all. It may ſometimes be neceſſary to join in ſport and frolic; but I am glad you ſee that ſomething more is eſſential to happineſs.

I was conſidering, before you came in, what were the chief eſſentials to happineſs, and (Religion pre ſuppoſed) I think they are,

Evenneſs of temper—by which I would underſtand a regular chearfulneſs, founded on good-humour, refined by benevolence, and adorned by politeneſs.

Induſtry,

Moderation, and

Prudence.

You

You may think my mentioning Chearfulneſs a contradiction to what I ſaid juſt now; but if you will read the Spectator, Vol. V. No. 381, you will learn a very judicious diſtinction between chearfulneſs and mirth. Chearfulneſs is a regular temper of the mind. Mirth is a ſudden ſtart and ſally. Chearfulneſs tends to ſupport our ſpirits;—Mirth exhauſts them. Chearfulneſs is conſiſtent with every thing that is ſerious, uſeful, and reſpectable;—intemperate Mirth inclines us to idleneſs, levity, and careleſsneſs.

A chearful temper is the moſt pleaſing and deſirable thing in the world:—it keeps a perſon alive to every impreſſion of gladneſs and delight, which is preſented to him by the objects about him;—enables him to give and receive pleaſure from a thouſand little incidents, which, though they may ſeem trifling, becauſe they are occurring every day, yet altogether make up a very conſiderable ſum of happineſs. The Spectator has ſomewhere this paſſage, which was

pointed

pointed out to me long ſince by a very ſenſible friend :

" It is, perhaps, not much thought of, but " it is certainly a very important leſſon, to " learn how to enjoy ordinary life, and to " be able to reliſh our being, without the " tranſport of ſome paſſion, or the gratifi- " cation of ſome appetite."

This is what a chearful, even temper enables us to do ;—it teaches us to improve the preſent moment, and circumſtance, whatever it is, inſtead of waſting our time and happineſs in vain wiſhes and regret, for ſomething that is not. It ſupplies us with a thouſand arguments in our own favour, by ſuggeſting reaſons why we ſhould be ſatisfied and happy :—it ſweetens every ſituation, transforms a wilderneſs into a garden, and improves a garden into a paradiſe.

Mary. But, Mama ! one cannot be pleaſed and chearful, whether things go to one's mind, or not.

Mama.

Mama. My dear, a chearful temper will generally make things go to your mind ;—it will prevent all that fretting, and diſquietude at little vexations and diſappointments, which, though the occaſions that produce them, may be trifling enough, yet deduct greatly from the happineſs of life ;—and when it is joined with religion, and good ſenſe, it will enable a perſon to enjoy a great deal of comfort, in ſituations that are not the moſt pleaſant, and which they would not have choſen for themſelves.

It is impoſſible to make every event and circumſtance fall out juſt as you would have had it. The ſun will be under a cloud, when you wiſh it to ſhine ;—a horſe will be lame, when you want to go out ;—and the diligence or leiſure of other people will not always keep pace with your wiſhes :—ſo that if your happineſs is to depend on what may happen in the next hour, it ſtands on a very inſecure footing. But a temper truly even and chearful, as it cannot make time

and

and occaſion bend to it, bends to them, where it cannot do juſt what it intended,—conſiders what is next beſt, and ſets about it, without lingering and diſcontent.

For many more years of your life, at leaſt, my dear, it will be your duty to ſubmit to the direction and inclination of others, —and it will be a ſad thing if it is not your *pleaſure* too, if you feel yourſelf uneaſy and diſſatisfied, whenever your inclinations are broken in upon, by thoſe whoſe authority and experience you ought to reſpect.

Mary. I do not know, Madam, that I am ever diſobedient to your commands.

Mama. No, my dear; but I love you too well to be contented with mere ſlaviſh obedience. Reluctant obedience, as it can hardly ſatisfy your own conſcience, ſo it will neither ſecure your happineſs, render you amiable to your friends, or acceptable to me.

It

It is neceſſary, for your own benefit, and for the good order of the family, that your conduct ſhould be ſubject to my controul; and whether you may, in every particular inſtance, ſee the propriety and neceſſity of the reſtraint I lay upon you, or no, yet as you have general grounds for believing that I wiſh to promote your happineſs and welfare in every thing, aud muſt be convinced, that young people are not able to conduct and take care of themſelves, there is abundant reaſon why you ſhould chearfully and readily conform to my wiſhes;—and indeed a chearful and quick compliance is the only praiſe you can have Every body knows, that a parent muſt be obeyed, if they chuſe to be ſo; they therefore give a young perſon no credit for doing as they are bid;—but if children can change their ſchemes, or give up their inclinations, with unaffected willingneſs, and a ſmiling countenance, there is a beauty in their behaviour, which ſeldom eſcapes obſervation. As, on the contrary, nothing has ſhocked or diſguſted

me

me more, than ſometimes to ſee, among my acquaintance, a parent's commands received with a gloomy and dejected countenance, and obeyed with lingering feet, and murmurs which were perhaps not always ſecret.

Againſt ſuch diſgrace and folly, a chearful uniformity of temper will preſerve you, and teach you to find amuſement and happineſs within the limits allotted you.

There is likewiſe an obſtacle to chearfulneſs, which I would wiſh to guard you againſt, and which, though it often proceeds as much from a bad habit, as from any ſettled diſcontent, yet wears off the brightneſs of your own chearfulneſs, breaks very much in upon that of the ſociety you live amongſt, and by no means prejudices ſtrangers in your favour;—I mean, a way of indulging little complaints, or impatience on every trifling occaſion.—— "How teazing this work is!"—"How this buckle hurts me!"—"This pen is ſo tireſome!"

ſome!" and a hundred ſuch exclamations—which, though they may be forgotten almoſt as ſoon as they are uttered—yet interrupt "the even tenor of our way,"—and are very oppoſite to that ſpirit of chearfulneſs, which ſhould teach us either to remove, or bear little inconveniences, without thinking them worth complaining of.

Still worſe, are repeated lamentations, at ſome degree—often, perhaps, a very ſlight one—of pain and illneſs.

How often have I obſerved a very bearable head-ach—a chilblain—a little tooth-ach, or even a ſcratched finger,—interrupt the converſation, and diſturb the chearfulneſs of a family for a whole afternoon!

To ſuppreſs ſuch complaints, may, indeed rather be called an exerciſe of patience, than of chearfulneſs—but it is what habitual chearfulneſs will very much aſſiſt you in—ſince it is the part of chearfulneſs, not only

to heighten the comforts,—but to leſſen the evils of life.

But your eyes are caſt on yonder window; and indeed all Nature looks ſo gay and pleaſant—that I think the beſt method to promote your chearfulneſs at preſent, is to take a walk in the garden.

Little Lydia will be very much pleaſed to go with you,—and to have her little baſket filled with roſes;—there are a great many that want cutting.

Third Day's Converſation.

GOOD HUMOUR.

MAMA *and* MARY.

Mama. I DID not expect Mrs. Ramble would have gone ſo ſoon: you were, I dare ſay, ſorry to part with the young ladies, and I believe they would not have diſliked a longer viſit;—they ſeemed to enjoy themſelves very much in the garden.

Mary. I do not know what kind of enjoyment they might have;—but I confeſs that I had none in their company.

They were often very merry—but their mirth was ſo unkind—that I could have no ſhare in it;—each ſeemed delighted, when ſhe could play the other ſome croſs, rude trick.

Miſs Ramble threw her ſiſter down, every time ſhe ſtoop'd to gather ſtrawberries;—pricked her with ſweet briar,—ſcattered her flowers,—and, when ſhe had provoked Miſs Maria to be peeviſh, appeared highly entertained: nor was Maria much behind-hand with her, but retaliated in the ſame kind of way; ſo that their whole time was divided between a laugh of ill-natured triumph, and a grumble of petulance and contention; indeed, they both of them found occaſions enough for quarrelling; for nothing was ſo trifling, as not to be thought worth a conteſt; a ſnail's ſhell—or a pebble—would furniſh abundant matter for a diſpute; and two or three poor caterpillars were ſqueezed to death, while each was endeavouring to make them their prize.

They were never of the ſame mind—except when they joined in ſome miſchievous trick againſt me: that, however, did not afford them all the entertainment they expected,—becauſe I did not divert them with any exclamations or complaints;—and though

though they were very ingenious in deviſing how to perplex me,—they had not the pleaſure of ſeeing me once either quarrelſome or ſulky.

Mama. I am very glad you acted ſo properly; I dare ſay your conduct proceeded from motives of the pureſt good-nature; but if you wiſhed to puniſh or teize an ill-tempered perſon, nothing can do it ſo effectually, as preſerving your own temper unmoved;—for by that means you diſappoint them in the very thing they aimed at; they ſought to make themſelves merry at your expence, by provoking you, and then diverting themſelves with all the contortions of your mind, as ſome who ſhew their brutality in another way, find themſelves ſport, in the aukward twiſting and writhing of the creature whoſe body they have tormented.

Or, if their malignity is more ſerious, inſtead of ſtinging, they wiſh to ſtab, and deſire that every wound they inflict, ſhould

be fatal to the ſerenity and chearfulneſs of your ſoul.

By an eaſy and unaffected calmneſs, and good-humour,—you defeat all their endeavours, and make them feel their worthleſsneſs and inſignificance in the moſt forcible manner;—they are then thrown below you;—but any perſon with whom you enter into a conteſt, you raiſe to an equality with you—which does not ſeem enough attended to, by thoſe proud people, who are always taking offence, and diſputing.

But, as I ſaid before,—I hope you will always do what is right, from the moſt benevolent motives—and you are not to conſider the unpleaſant time you ſpent, with theſe ladies, as loſt—ſince it has given you an opportunity of exerciſing your virtue—and may lead you to conſider—how neceſſary it is, to the happineſs of life, that chearfulneſs ſhould be connected with good-humour;——they were ſportive and gay—but

very

very aptly may Solomon's compariſon be uſed to their mirth ;—it was like "the crackling of thorns under the pots ;"—like *that*, ſhort-lived—and while it laſted, *they*, like the thorns, were conſuming away—conſuming away with evil and vexatious paſſions, which, though they break out into petulant mirth, deſtroy all real happineſs ;—for can that pleaſure be well founded, which ariſes from the uneaſineſs of another ?—— Dreadful is the condition of that man, to whom food is taſteful—only when he can mix poiſon with the nouriſhment of others.

Mary. I am ſure, if I were ever diſpoſed to be rude and ill-natured, the recollection of the Miſs Rambles would check me at once,—for I would not for the world appear in ſo diſagreeable a light to any body—as they did to me.

Mama. The Lacedemonians, you know, uſed to make their ſlaves drunken, and then exhibit them to their children—that the diſ-

guſt

guſt they conceived from their appearance, might deter them from drunkenneſs;—and I think, the ſight of an ill-tempered perſon, may as forcibly perſuade to the government of one's paſſions another way,—for, indeed, no one could bear to excite ſuch ſentiments as a quarrelſome man produces in all who obſerve him.

But I was obſerving to you—that, in order to "poſſeſs your ſoul in peace,"—it is neceſſary that the chearfulneſs of temper, which I recommend to you—ſhould be founded on good-humour.

There ariſe, in the intercourſe of every day, ſo many little interferences of intereſt and inclination, ſo many trifling errors, and ſlight provocations,—that good-nature ſeems to be a virtue continually neceſſary to make life paſs comfortably to ourſelves, or others.

And as there is no virtue which is more connected with happineſs—ſince it ſecures

to

to us the ſerenity of our own minds—ſo there is none which ſo much conciliates the favor, eſteem, and good-will of all about us;—the love of others is, indeed, but a natural return for that pleaſure and ſatisfaction which good-nature every where communicates,—and eſteem is connected with thoſe qualities and diſpoſitions of the mind, from which good-nature and kindneſs flow;—as, on the other hand—the inconveniences we ſuffer from ill-nature, do not offend us ſo much, as the temper of mind from which it proceeds.

Nothing ſo much obſtructs the exerciſe of good-nature—as pride and ſelfiſhneſs—qualities which no one would chuſe to be thought poſſeſſed of—and the imputation of which is an affront;—and yet, from what origin, but pride and ſelfiſhneſs, do all thoſe quarrels and diſputes, which diſgrace the world, and too often private families, proceed?

If a perſon is humble enough to believe that thoſe he lives amongſt, are at leaſt as wiſe, and of as much conſequence as himſelf—and have full as much right to aſſert their own opinion, and gratify their own humour, as he has,—— if, I ſay, any one "thinks thus ſoberly of himſelf," he will be little inclined to contend ſharply for his own way—or reſent, with acrimony, any oppoſition to his ſentiments or inclinations;——and if to humility, he joins that diſintereſtedneſs—which makes him not deſire inordinately to gratify himſelf—but inclines him to ſeek the ſatisfaction and enjoyment of his friends,—almoſt all occaſion for conteſt and complaint would ceaſe—— and the fiery look—the ſcornful ſneer—the pout of diſcontent—the contentious ſtruggle —or the voice of angry clamour—would never be known in a family, where pride and ſelfiſhneſs were ſtrangers.

Mary. I have heard it ſaid, that no perſon meets with ſo many mortifications as a proud man.

Mama.

Mama. It is truly ſaid——and if proud and ſelfiſh perſons could liſten to the voice of reaſon, they might be told—that the methods they uſually purſue—do but ill ſerve the cauſe of thoſe very paſſions they are ſo bent upon indulging ;—for methinks it can be no great compliment to a man's pride—that he puts his comfort and happineſs in the power of any perſon who chuſes to make an attempt upon it—by ſuffering every little contradiction, or oppoſition, to diſturb the tranquillity and chearfulneſs of his mind—and excite in him the painful ſenſations—which fretfulneſs, paſſion, indignation, and all ſuch angry emotions, always produce.

If he muſt be proud—his ſuperiority, one would think, might be much better maintained—by not thinking any perſon of conſequence enough to break in upon his peace and ſerenity—or to provoke him to argument and diſputation ;——and the ſelfiſh man might likewiſe find—that in conſulting his

his own pleaſure and indulgence—the trueſt way to ſecure it, would be to contend leſs about it.

After all his eagerneſs and clamour, he is often overborne, and loſes that which he diſputed for—and conciliates neither the pity, nor good-will of any one;——but, did he voluntarily yield to others, on ſome occaſions, they would naturally return ſuch kindneſs—by preferring his gratification on others,——and he might be ten times more the maſter of the property and actions of other men, than he could ever be by violence and turbulence.

Beſides—my dear girl,—what indulgence that is obtained at the expence of good-humour and benevolence, can ever be enjoyed?

The mind, from whence alone true happineſs can flow, is diſquieted and diſturbed—and you might as well expect, that harmonious ſounds might be drawn forth, by heaping books of muſic upon an inſtrument that is out of tune—as that happineſs could be produced

produced by any outward poſſeſſions or gratifications, when the ſoul is ſick and diſordered.

But in talking ſo long, I forget how much your youth wants variety.—I had ſomething more to ſay—but we will reſerve it for another time.

Fourth Day's Converſation:

BENEVOLENCE.

MARY *reading—to her enter* MAMA.

Mama. I DID not expect to find you returned ſo ſoon, Mary.

Mary. I have not been out, Madam.

Mama. How did that happen?—I ſaw you running, with great alacrity, to get your hat, when your Papa called you to go into the fields, and botanize with him and George;—what prevented you?

Mary. You know, Mama, the accident to Leah's foot will not allow her to walk at preſent,—ſhe is debarred many pleaſures we enjoy.—This morning, ſhe had ſet her mind upon working at her Map of England—but ſhe

ſhe could not begin it, without a little aſſiſtance from me—and though ſhe ſaid nothing, ſhe looked ſo diſappointed, when ſhe ſaw me going out, that I went and excuſed myſelf to my Papa, and ſat down with her;—and I am ſure, no pleaſure I could have had, in following my own inclinations, could have been equal to the joy I have felt, from ſeeing how happy this little attention has made her. She is ſo full of affection to me, and of delight at the neat appearance her work makes—that I am very far from regretting the little ſelf-denial I exerciſed.—Mary has juſt now aſſiſted her to go into her own room to dreſs—ſhe took her work with her, that ſhe might have the pleaſure of ſhewing it firſt to you herſelf.

Mama. You ſeem, my dear girl, ſo well to underſtand the joys of Kindneſs, or Benevolence, that I almoſt think, what I had to ſay on the ſubject, unneceſſary;——for to thoſe who know, by experience, the bleſſedneſs of giving pleaſure, or ſatisfaction to a

friend—all arguments and perſuaſions are ſuperfluous.—All we want, is to perſuade people to taſte and ſee "how good and joyful a thing it is," to be kind and loving,—and then we may truſt them to their own feelings.

Mary. I ſhould, Madam, almoſt repent what I have been rejoicing in, if it prevented me from hearing any advice, or inſtruction which you was ſo kind to intend for me.

Mama. I only meant, my dear, to enlarge a little upon the ſubject we entered upon yeſterday—and ſhew you the happineſs that ariſes from Good-humour, as heightened by Benevolence.

We conſidered Good-humour yeſterday, as a neceſſary ingredient to Happineſs,—becauſe it preſerves our own mind eaſy and calm, and procures for us the good-will and kind offices of thoſe we live amongſt;—it is alſo very certain—that eaſineſs of temper

preſerves

preſerves a perſon from a thouſand vexations and perplexities, that fall to the lot of the captious and quarrelſome man;——but when Good-nature is founded on Benevolence—and the intereſt we take in the happineſs, and ſatisfaction of others—it then, indeed, becomes the ſource of the moſt exquiſite delight,—then, indeed, is it like the precious ointment, alluded to by the Pſalmiſt, that being poured upon the head, ran down unto the beard—even unto Aaron's beard, and went down unto the ſkirts of his cloathing,—giving value and charms to the moſt trifling occurrence and common circumſtance of life,—and filling all the houſe with the ſweet odour of its perfume.

You ſay yourſelf—you had more pleaſure in this little ſacrifice you made to kindneſs and good-nature, than any pleaſure that terminated merely in yourſelf, could have given you;—and thoſe who make great ſacrifices, and exerciſe great ſelf-denials, for the ſake of Benevolence and Charity, receive a re-

ward, by which they are abundantly recompenſed.

I have often wondered, when I have ſeen perſons, by their petulance—fretfulneſs—and aſperity—diffuſe diſſatisfaction and diſtreſs all round them.

I have, I ſay, wondered, how they could rob themſelves of the delicate pleaſure, which they might have purchaſed by a contrary conduct,—and how they could bear to ſee that countenance clouded with grief, or ſuffuſed with anger,—which a kind word, or action, might have overſpread with the ſmiles of chearfulneſs and affection; —— or how they could ſupport the reflection, that, inſtead of being like good angels—the miniſters of peace, of joy, and love—they ſhould chuſe ſo much to imitate evil ones—by ſpreading diſcord, diſtreſs, and enmity—and loſe, without remorſe, and regret, that delight which ariſes from a mutual intercourſe of tender, and obliging offices;—for ſurely

no

no delight can be equal to that of ſeeing the countenance of another lighted up—and his heart made glad, by our behaviour to him.

It is a very alarming thought, and which ought to make us very cautious of our conduct—that the happineſs of others is put ſo much in our power;—for who is there ſo inſignificant, that has not the pain or pleaſure of ſome circle—however ſmall—in his hands—who, cannot, by kindneſs, forbearance, and compliance—leſſen to ſome few who depend upon him—the evils of life—or heighten its joys—or who, may not, by neglect—rudeneſs—or contradiction—damp their enjoyments——or give poignancy to their ſorrows.

You, my dear—live in a large family—in which you may have frequent opportunities of exerciſing your own virtues—and of communicating and receiving happineſs, by a thouſand "gentle offices of patient love";—but even in ſeeking our own happineſs, ſome little

little reſolution and ſelf-command is neceſſary;——an angry emotion will ſometimes ariſe, which the peace of yourſelf and others require you to ſuppreſs,—inclinations will interfere—and you cannot enjoy the ſweets of ſocial affection—without denying a preſent humour.

The impetuoſity of youth will ſometimes hurry you on—and it will be neceſſary to ſtop, and conſider, whether—while you are purſuing your own pleaſure—you are not giving pain to ſome one who ought to be dear to you.——And to enjoy all the bliſs that Benevolence is capable of beſtowing,—it is requiſite to have a general guard over your actions—a conſtant attention to your conduct—that you may loſe no opportunity of doing a kind action,—nor ever be betrayed into doing an unkind one.

You have ſhewn, that you can prefer the preſent pleaſure of another perſon to your own,—and by cheriſhing ſuch a diſpoſition, till

till it becomes the uniform and habitual temper of your mind,—you will refine and exalt every enjoyment,—your pleaſures will be multiplied a thouſand fold,—when you can, not only be happy in the happineſs of others—but have a ſtill nearer ſhare in their ſatisfaction, by ſeeing it ariſe from your own actions.

Mary. I cannot think myſelf of conſequence enough, to contribute to the happineſs of many perſons ;—but your kindneſs, Madam,—and that of my brothers and ſiſters, gives importance to what I do in my own family ;—and I ſhould be very much ſhocked, if I could be the cauſe of the leaſt uneaſineſs to any of you.

Mama. I am ſure, my dear, it can never be your deliberate deſign ;—but where people live continually together—their affairs and inclinations will ſo mingle, and interſect each other,—their pleaſures, and purſuits will ſo often interfere,—and the freedom of familiar

diſcourſe

diſcourſe be ſo apt to throw them off their guard—that a perſon who would be mutually pleaſed and pleaſing, in ſuch a ſociety, ought to have upon their minds a continual fear of cauſing offence, and pain,—and a ſincere ſolicitude to give ſatisfaction, and pleaſure.

I have known young people, who would not have done a thing deliberately cruel, or malevolent,—yet, for want of being ſufficiently alive to the feelings of other people—and from haſtineſs of ſpirit, poſitiveneſs, and a love of their own way,—have kept their family in a ſtate of conſtant confuſion and uneaſineſs.

With a family of ſuch a diſpoſition, I once ſpent a few days,—and very painful ones they were.——One could never be ſecure of paſſing a quarter of an hour, without having one's ears wounded by ſome harſh joke—rude contradiction—ſatiric ſpeech—or angry ſquabble.

I felt

I was frightened every time any of them walked acroſs the room, or opened their lips—leſt ſome rude or heedleſs thing ſhould be done—or ſome provoking or diſguſting word ſpoken—or ſuppoſed to be ſpoken,—which ſhould put them in a flame;—for no trifle was ever paſt over, for the ſake of peace,—no ſevere ſaying ever ſuppreſſed from tenderneſs and delicacy,—no fault forgiven from motives of affection,—but every error was enlarged upon,—every mote was magnified,—their ſpirits were always ready to take the alarm,—and in the midſt of the gayeſt play,—a ſmall hurt, totally undeſigned,—or an unpleaſant word, careleſsly ſpoken,—were enough to overſet them all—and "pour the ſweet milk of concord into hell."

Mary. Dear Mama—what a picture have you drawn!——I tremble, leſt I ſhould ever, in the ſmalleſt degree, have reſembled it.

Mama. My time has not, however, always paſſed ſo unpleaſantly.—I have been happy enough

enough to mix in little ſocieties, where all was "peace and good-will;"—where their hearts ſtood prepared to receive every thing that was ſaid and done,—with more than civility,—with tenderneſs and affection;—ever, were they ready to put the kindeſt interpretation upon the words and actions of each other.

Very ſeldom in that family was there occaſion to "paſs by a tranſgreſſion,"—but if it did happen, I am ſure they made it their "glory."

No retorting—no recrimination—no bitter bandying of words, in defence of an unimportant opinion.

One ſubject alone they contended upon,—which, ſhould give up his own indulgence, or deſire, to that of his brothers and ſiſters.—The "law of kindneſs was on their lips,"—their demeanour was gentleneſs,—and their conſtant aim, to communicate that happineſs with which their own breaſts overflowed.

I need

I need not aſk my dear girl!—which ſociety you would wiſh to reſemble; nor which you would wiſh to dwell amongſt.

Mary. Surely not!—May I be like the latter! and may my lot ever be with ſuch!

Mama. If the firſt part of your wiſh be fulfilled, it will be likely to bring with it the accompliſhment of the ſecond;—for, ſurely, ſuch a temper muſt impart ſome of its own ſweetneſs to all whom it is placed near.

I have, hitherto, ſet forth the charms of Benevolence—only as is related to the daily intercourſe of family friendſhip—and is connected with the innumerable occaſions of common life,—where, though it is chiefly employed in ſmall things—yet does it not, for that reaſon, loſe its value, or its beauty; ——indeed, ſuch is the magic of Benevolence, that it can convert the moſt trifling and inſignificant action into a deed of im-

portance, or of virtue—give it a new nature —and a dignity not its own.

What I have already ſaid, has, I fear, been too long for you;——but would my time, and the vivacity of your youth permit,—could I enlarge on the higher and more extraordinary labours of Benevolence, —could I ſhew you all the mighty works of generoſity, ſelf-denial, and humanity, which *Charity* is capable of performing.—I ſhould open a wide and magnificent view—which might, however, lead me too far.——Your ſcene of action has at preſent narrower limits,—hereafter you may extend it.

" Graſp the whole worlds of reaſon, life and
" ſenſe,
" In one cloſe ſyſtem of Benevolence;
" Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
" And height of bliſs, but height of *Charity*."

You will then, I hope, know experimentally the joy there is in forgiving injuries—in communicating comfort—in ſoothing ſorrow—or in relieving wretchedneſs,—a joy, which

which the mere exercise of good-humour, without sentiment, can never bestow.

There are some characters who preserve an unaffected and uniform good humour,—but never enter enough into your feelings to act the part of a friend,—who hear your tale of sorrow with the same vacant or smiling countenance, that they listen to tea-table chat,—advise you to be easy,—and convince you that they are so perfectly so—that your anxities will never break in upon their quiet.

Persons of this cast—though they may escape much of the uneasiness which is produced by a morose and dissatisfied temper,—yet will never taste the sublime pleasure, which arises from sentiment, and sensibility.

Do not, therefore, arm your breast against a compassionate sympathy, from a fear that your portion of happiness will be lessened by your becoming a sharer in the sufferings

of others.——Though your gaiety may be now and then interrupted by a ſummons to "weep with them that weep."—yet will you be made abundant amends by the frequent opportunities you will have to "rejoice with them that do rejoice."

Nay, ſuch virtuous ſadneſs is not without its ſatisfaction;

"For tender Sorrow has he. pleaſure too,
"Pleaſures which proſp'rous Dulneſs never knew."

And your tears will be converted into pearls, which will at once adorn and dignify you.

It may ſeem ſtrange, after enlarging upon ſuch noble and ſubſtantial good qualities, to mention Politeneſs as an auxiliary to Virtue and Happineſs;—yet, certain it is, that nothing tends more to cheriſh and cultivate kindneſs and good-will, than an habitual politeneſs;—it ſoftens the manners,—corrects the conduct,—and, by laying a reſtraint upon that blunt manner of acting

and

and ſpeaking, too frequent among familiar friends,—cuts off a thouſand little occaſions of offence—and ſuperinduces a habit of humanity and kindneſs.

For want of this—people not naturally ill-natured, are yet continually giving pain and diſguſt;—for every man feels that he does not like to have coarſe jokes—blunt truths—or troubleſome freedoms uſed to himſelf—though his delicacy does not reſtrain him from uſing them to others;—and, indeed, to caſual obſervers, nothing can be more diſagreeable, than to ſee people behave with clowniſh roughneſs to each other, only becauſe they are the moſt near and intimate friends in the world:—as, on the other hand—how delightful, to ſee a family of near relations, though entirely free from reſtraint and ceremony,—yet behaving to each other with conſtant civility and complaiſance,—not neglecting an attention to common modes of life—the performance of trifling good offi-

ees,—but affectionate without art, and polite without pains.

Mary. Indeed,—Madam,—your advice makes me acquainted with my own conduct.——I fear I have often been remiſs in little attentions to my brothers and ſiſters—which I ſhould have been aſhamed to be wanting in, to any body elſe.

Mama. My dear—underſtand me.—There are certain ceremonials, which it may be neceſſary to obſerve to ſtrangers, which would have too formal an air in our own family;—but there are a thouſand delicate civilities—which contribute to the convenience of a friend,—ſhew that you are not unmindful of them,—and produce a reciprocation of kindneſs and regard.—Theſe, like gay flowers, in the midſt of cultivated fields, enliven and beautify the more ſerious and ſolid employments of domeſtic life.

But the clock reminds me, that I have but a ſhort time to dreſs,—and I ſhould very much offend againſt my own maxim, if I ſuffered myſelf to go down to dinner in ſlovenly or negligent garb,—for it would ſeem as if I had no ſolicitude to be pleaſing in the eyes of my family—ſo be ſo good to ring my bell.

Fifth

Fifth Day's Converſation.

INDUSTRY.

MAMA *and* MARY, *as juſt returned from a viſit.*

Mary. I WONDER what is the reaſon that Miſs Eliza Young never appears as her ſiſter!

She ſeems to have as good health—her Mama is quite as kind to one, as to the other,—and her grandmother and aunts make her as many preſents, and take her out as much as they do her ſiſter,——yet Miſs Young appears always chearful and pleaſed—and Miſs Eliza is generally uncomfortable—low-ſpirited,—and diſcontented.

Mama. I believe the true reaſon why Miſs Eliza is not happy, is—that ſhe is very idle and indolent.

Miſs

Miſs Young is always employed in ſomething improving or uſeful,—ſhe has, therefore, a conſtant fund of entertainment and ſatisfaction, the variety and judicious choice of her employments afford her amuſement,—and conſciouſneſs that ſhe is properly employed—ſupplies her with a ſuperior pleaſure.

Miſs Eliza, on the contrary, ſuffers day after day to paſs, without being able to produce one uſeful thing that ſhe has done—as her mind has no exerciſe—it can have neither health nor vigour,—all is langour and laſſitude, what, as you may remember, Miſs Talbot calls, "the ruſt of unuſed faculties."

All thoſe ſources of pleaſure, which are open to the diligent and perſevering—are ſhut to her;—and in the midſt of youth—health—and riches—ſhe is continually fretful—diſpirited—and diſſatisfied.

Induſtry,

Induſtry—my dear child—is abſolutely neceſſary to Happineſs ;——God, who mercifully connects our duty and happineſs—has done ſo, particularly in this, and the ſame means by which we become beneficial to others——makes us alſo comfortable to ourſelves :——as, on the other hand—if the idle perſon is a dead weight to ſociety,—he is no leſs a burden to himſelf. ——Employment alone can make us chearful and ſatisfied.

Mary. I thought, Mama, Induſtry was more particularly the virtue of the poor,—and that perſons in a higher ſtation were exempted from ſo ſtrict an attention to the manner of ſpending their time.

Mama. There are, Mary, employments of very different kinds—and ſuitable to very different ſtations ;——but employment of ſome kind is the duty of every one.

I do not mean only to recommend that kind of buſineſs which is particularly underſtood

ſtood by the phraſe, *work*,—for though *that* certainly ought not to be overlooked by a young lady—ſo neither ought it to engroſs all her time.——But what I would enforce upon you, with every power of perſuaſion I have, is, never to be idle.

To have always ſome rational occupation, is as much the duty of the rich, as the poor,—nor can there be a more uncomfortable, or contemptible creature—than one who ſaunters and whiles away the day, in liſtleſs indolence.

Both mind and body were intended by that God who created them, for employment;—and no one can act counter to the will of God, and be happy.

Idleneſs is, indeed, ſo unſuitable to our nature—that all our faculties languiſh under it.

You would think it a very ſevere puniſhment to be confined within the precincts of a pri-

a priſon.——But this is a ſentence, which the idle man voluntarily inflicts upon himſelf;—if to idleneſs, lazineſs be added—he often allows his body no larger a range,—his mind, at leaſt, is always confined in narrow limits,—without exerciſe,—without variety,—without pleaſures to entertain it,—or any comforts to refreſh it.

To him the book of nature is ſhut.

" Fair Knowledge to his eyes her ample page,
" Rich with the ſpoils of Time, does ne'er unfold."

He riſes without an object to purſue—or hope of the day being made glad, by any praiſe-worthy performance,—and ſinks at night to a reſt, that is not made ſweet by any ſelf-approving recollection.——The lamentation that Titus once made, " I have loſt a day!"—he may appropriate always;——and as idleneſs makes a man thus uneaſy and wearifome to himſelf,—it makes him likewiſe inſipid and inſignificant to his acquaintance.——Taſteleſs to himſelf, he has

no arts, by which he may become pleaſing to others;—ill-ſupplied as his mind is—he can furniſh out no entertainment to his gueſts;—he is tireſome to ſociety—yet ſolitude is death to him;—without any fund of comfort in his own breaſt—he is compelled, as Seed ſays, "to beg his daily happineſs;"—but often finds people as little diſpoſed to attend to him, as they are to the beggar of another claſs—whoſe lazineſs prompts him to ſolicit an alms, becauſe he will not be at the pains to procure food for himſelf by labour.

Mary. You would make one out of love with idleneſs.

Mama. I ſhall rejoice to do ſo—and, I hope, win you to a love of induſtry—application—and activity,—by repreſenting the pleaſures and comforts they bring with them.

We love that which leads us to the accompliſhment of our wiſhes,—this, Induſtry,

humanly ſpeaking, does.——There are few things which are denied to reſolute induſtry and perſeverance.

"The ſoul of the ſluggard deſireth, and hath not."

How poor is it to ſay,—"I wiſh I had this advantage—I wiſh I was informed on ſuch a ſubject—I wiſh I had executed ſuch a work,"—when nothing is wanting to the obtaining our wiſh, but our own efforts and diligence.

Induſtry, then, beſtows the pleaſure—which every one muſt feel, in ſeeing his work proſper and improve under his hands,—of ſeeing that, which he hath undertaken to do—grow up into ſomething uſeful or ornamental.

You never, I dare ſay, finiſhed any piece of work, without feeling glad that it was done;—I do not mean glad that the trouble

was

was over—but pleaſed that the thing was performed.

The more regularly induſtrious you are—the more of this kind of pleaſure you will feel,—a calm and ſatisfied pleaſure—ariſing from the thought—that you have done rightly—that all is going on well—and every different taſk you have to do—will be performed in its proper time and place—compoſedly and thoroughly.

The induſtry and application of the mind will be continually opening to you—bright and enchanting proſpects—ſtill preſenting ſomething new and delightful to you—which will amply repay your diligence and aſſiduity,—gratify the moſt laudable curioſity—and fill every vacancy in your thoughts with the richeſt treaſures——treaſures, which the more they are reviewed--the more will their value increaſe.

Mary. I often wiſh to do a great deal more than I find time to do.

Mama. You will be ſure of doing a great deal—if you are never unemployed,—but you are apt to loſe a great part of the day, while you are waiting for an opportunity to do this, or that particular thing.

It has been obſerved—I think by Lord Cheſterfield—that the minutes and *quart d'heurs* which we idle away, while we are waiting for a carriage—expecting a ſummons to dinner—or the like—would ſuffice for acquiring ſome uſeful ſcience—or performing ſome work of conſequence.

It is not the ſudden effort, that overcomes difficulties, and makes a progreſs.

The Allegory I have ſomewhere ſeen of the effect of Time upon Paintings—may, with ſome little alteration, be applied to Induſtry.

Although the exertion of every ſingle moment produces nothing diſtinguiſhing; yet, by

by regular perſeverance, the effect becomes beautiful and ſtriking.

The fine and laborious productions, which you have ſometimes ſeen in needle-work—drawing, or other things, ſhew you what may be done;—and though you may not wiſh to exert your efforts exactly in the ſame way—it evinces the poſſibility of making a progreſs in any thing you may chuſe to apply to.

How eaſy to aſſort and vary your occupations, ſo as to prevent any of them from becoming tedious to you;—or if at any time you ſhould feel a little reluctance to do what you are convinced you ought to do—you will be abundantly rewarded for that little pain, by the pleaſure you will feel, at having got the better of yourſelf—and perſevering in what you knew was right.

Mary. But is not relaxation ſometimes neceſſary?

Mama. The very change of your employments will be relaxation—eſpecially if you teach yourſelf to take pleaſure in ſome particular ones.

You know you have formerly, when your morning buſineſs has been done—gone to work upon your doll's things, by way of amuſement;——in the ſame manner would I wiſh you to do now,—with your drawing—fancy works—lighter kind of reading—and ſo on.——But I cannot think it neceſſary to be ever quite idle.

I do not mean, that I would not ſometime have you lay down your book, to *think*.—"More is got by thinking an hour, than by reading a year."——But then take care that you do think,—not ſuffer your thoughts to ſtand ſtill—or ramble to trifles; and that, when you are ſent out to gather fruit—you do not divert yourſelf with picking daiſies.

Mary.

Mary. I often think over my books when I am walking;—you do not, I am ſure, account it idle to walk,—for you often bid me go and take a walk.

Mama. Certainly not!——to walk out is abſolutely neceſſary to ſecure health, and to refreſh your ſpirits,—and may be highly uſeful, as well as delightful,—if we keep our minds open to the beauties of nature—and to all that variety of wonders, which the works of God offer to our view;——but I ſhould call it idle, if you were to ſaunter away your morning in the fields, or in the garden,—inſtead of ſettling to more neceſſary buſineſs—and to ſuch employments as are more particularly requiſite for your age and ſituation.——Walking is ſo far from being an idle way of ſpending your time—that it is, perhaps, a neceſſary duty,—becauſe, as I ſaid before, it promotes the health of your body, and the chearfulneſs of your mind.

I do not even condemn the gaiety of ſportive play;—it may conduce to the ſame purpoſes,

poſes—and be ſometimes a means of promoting good-will and kindneſs among little ſocieties ;—but to enjoy ſúch relaxations—they muſt be under due regulations.—and downright idleneſs can never be excuſed—nor can it contribute to your pleaſure or comfort.

I call *downright idleneſs*, lounging about from one room to another—or doing ſome frivolous thing—which can never anſwer any uſeful purpoſe—merely to loiter away the time.

Nor is idleneſs only ſhewn in doing nothing ;——it is frequently diſcovered in the manner you ſet about your proper buſineſs,—there is an indolent, unmeaning way of working, reading, and ſo on—which carries its own puniſhment with it—becauſe it retards your progreſs in all your improvements and performances,—and after many hours, perhaps, ſpent, with your work or book in your hand—little is gained,—for the eyes

and

and attention were continually wandering after ſome trifle or other, or with a true idler—fixed on nothing at all.

Mary. I hope you think I ſpend my time to more advantage.

Mama. I am ſure you will experience the comforts of it.

In common life, the conveniences of induſtry—activity—and regularity, which is generally their attendant,——are innumerable.

There are few who move in ſo high a ſphere, as to have all the inconveniences of their remiſſneſs and negligence obviated by the diligence of others;——in your ſituation, and that of the generality of young perſons—a great deal muſt depend upon your own care and regularity; —— and lazineſs or forgetfulneſs, in little matters, frequently indulged, will deduct much from the pleaſure and enjoyment of your life,—produce a thouſand petty

per-

plexities—and often make those uncomfortable and displeased, whom you most wish to oblige and gratify.

There are some young persons, who, when they are called upon to go out—never have any thing in readiness;—their indolence prompts them to neglect *that* which they have not immediate occasion for,—and where the occasion does come—they are all in confusion—need all the house to wait upon them—and after detaining their friends for an hour, and hurrying their spirits—they set out with nothing properly adjusted about them,—when a quarter of the trouble they have had—would have served in a cooler moment, to put every thing in order about them.

Have you never experienced something of the same kind—Mary?

Mary. I hope at least, I shall not again.—I have been trying lately to portion out my time—that all my businesses may be done in their

their proper places,—and then, if I have an hour or two left, I may count them for my own.——I do not mean to idle—but to employ them as I like beſt.

Mama. You are very good,—and you will find that a judicious diſtribution of your time, will greatly facilitate your progreſs—and enable you to profit much more by what you read and learn—than if your buſineſs was performed at random,—by which means your employment might often be ſo unſkilfully jumbled—as that no part of your ſtudies would be ſo properly remembered and underſtood as they ought to be.

I muſt leave you now.

Sixth Day's Converſation.

MODERATION.

MAMA *and* MARY.

Mary. I THINK Miſs Wild muſt have been very happy at the play—ſhe was ſo eager and delighted about gaiety.

Mama. I cannot help differing from you—for I think if her ſpirits had been more compoſed, and her joy leſs tumultuous—that ſhe would have had ten times as much enjoyment of the evening.

Her anxiety while the ſcheme was doubtful—and tranſport afterwards—had flurried her ſo—that ſhe was half in a fever;—her voice—her ſtep—her look, all ſhewed hurry and perturbation,—and though ſhe felt ſo highly gratified, at having obtained her wiſh,

wiſh—yet her mind was too much agitated to be in a happy ſtate at that time,—and not well qualified to taſte all the pleaſure ſhe expected,—and her ſpirits afterwards were probably fatigued and exhauſted.

We are often very earneſt in purſuit of a variety of pleaſures, as the means of happineſs, and diſregard that—without which Happineſs cannot poſſibly be enjoyed—Moderation.

In the coarſer kinds of pleaſure—the fatal conſequences of intemperance are well known, and generally acknowledged,—and the glutton, and the wine bibber ſcarce pretend to excuſe their exceſſes, while they are purſuing them.——But there is an intemperance of a more delicate kind,—which, though it may wear a leſs unlovely form, is ſcarce leſs dangerous to reaſon—to happineſs—and frequently to health.———Any pleaſure, however innocent, or engaging in its nature—if indulged to exceſs—becomes a misfortune.

Moderation alone can connect happineſs with pleaſure—ſecure our delight beyond the preſent moment,—and preſerve us in ſuch a temper of mind as ſhall qualify us for enjoyment.

" Awe Nature's tumults, and chaſtiſe her joys,
" Leſt while we claſp, we kill them."

Moderation, I know, is a virtue of ſo grave an appearance, that young perſons are apt to diſmiſs her, to the ſociety of their ſeniors,—for which, by her garb and aſpect, ſhe ſeems better fitted;—but if you would venture to cultivate an acquaintance with her—you would find her a moſt deſirable companion;—ſhe will never reſtrain you from any real pleaſure—but will perſuade you to move ſo ſlowly towards the captivating object—that you may be able to diſcern whether or no it be good, and a thing to be deſired to make you happy;——ſhe would give you time to diſcover its evils and inconveniences, if it have any—or leiſure

ſure to examine and enjoy its beauties and delights.

There is nothing, my dear Mary, through the whole courſe of your life, more requiſite to keep you virtuous, reſpectable, and eaſy, than Moderation.——Nothing human can bear to be carried to exceſs,—not even our virtues;—they may degenerate into vices, or weakneſſes, if not kept within proper bounds,—and our bleſſings, if not ſeaſoned with moderation—may be corrupted into evils.

I have ſaid before, that Happineſs does not depend ſo much on any particular attainment—as upon the general temper of the mind;—but that ſerene and ſatisfied temper of mind which is moſt favourable to happineſs, is loſt in the ardent purſuit of caſual gratifications.

Exceſſive eagerneſs after pleaſure or amuſement, waſtes our ſpirits—makes us unſettled, and unfit to reliſh any of the more common

enjoyments of life—or to perform rightly the common duties of it.——In this ſituation, the heart is ill at eaſe—and unfit to enter coolly and chearfully into ſelf,——or to anſwer all the queſtions which reaſon or religion might aſk;—much leſs can it boldly preſent its ſchemes before them,—unfold its projects, and confeſs that it is engroſſed by vanity and trifles—when they demand its time and affection for better purpoſes—yet the moſt eſſential requiſite to happineſs—is ſelf-approbation,—while any doubts remain about us—when we cannot lay our hands upon our hearts, and ſay faithfully, I truſt I am doing right—we know not happineſs.

Mary. That is very true—and I hope I ſhall never covet pleaſure ſo much, as to ſacrifice my duty to it—or forfeit the approbation of my own conſcience;——but it is natural for young perſons to engage warmly in any thing that delights them.

Mama.

Mama. It may be natural,—but you are to remember, my dear, that our nature is not now in its perfection—and that following what is *natural*, is not always following what is *right*.——However, I do not profess myself a friend to stoical frigidity,—but the vehemence some young people shew in the pursuit of pleasure—is not the warmth of health—but the heat of a fever—and proves destructive to that very enjoyment they are so anxious for.——If "pleasure is embraced with too much ardour, it will perish in your grasp."

Mary. You remind me of the Boy and the Butterfly, in Dodsley's Fables.

Mama. I meant so to do;——the Allegory may be trifling—but the Moral is excellent.

When the mind has been hurried and disordered, and the expectation extravagantly

gantly raiſed,—we leave to the objects of our wiſhes but little power to delight us; ——our thoughts have been ſo pre-occupied with their charms, that they cannot go beyond what our imaginations have told us of them.——But how generally do they fall ſhort of it,—and what a diſſatisfaction and void do they leave in the heart—which had emptied itſelf of nobler gueſts to receive them.

Moderation, on the other hand—gives the higheſt reliſh to every innocent pleaſure; ——he who keeps his faculties compoſed and calm—is in the beſt diſpoſition to perceive and taſte the charms of every entertainment that can be offered him.——As he has indulged no romantic expectations, he will not be liable to diſappointment;—— every little circumſtance that is amuſing or pleaſurable, will be welcome to him:—his mind is in a diſpoſition to be pleaſed;—pleaſed with every little gratification around him;

him;—pleaſed with mankind;—pleaſed with himſelf;—and he taſtes a thouſand delicate joys, which do not enter into the idea of the ſelfiſh and zealous votary of pleaſure.

I ſaw by accident in the Spectator, the other day, ſome obſervations on this ſubject, which are ſo judicious and appoſite,—that I could not forbear tranſcribing them for you; tho' they are ſo much ſuperior to any thing I can ſay,—that they will make what I have to offer appear to great diſadvantage.

"He that is moderate in his wiſhes from "reaſon and choice,—and not reſigned from "fourneſs, diſtaſte, or diſappointment, doubles "all the pleaſures of life.—The air, the ſea-"ſon, a funſhiny day, or a fair proſpect, are "circumſtances of happineſs; and that which "he enjoys in common with all the world, "(by his exemption from the enchantments "by which all the world are bewitched) are "to him uncommon beneſits, and new ac-"quiſitions."

Moderation,

Moderation, you ſee then, my dear,—is ſo far from abating your enjoyments,—that they make every common gratification taſteful;—but the uncertainty of every thing in this world,—is another perſuaſive to moderation in our purſuits and attachments.

If our happineſs be fixed on the world,—with the faſhion of the world it will paſs away.

If you lean upon an unſtable reed,—as it gives way, you muſt fall with it.

Moderation, as it enables us to enjoy the gratifications that are offered us, prepares us to bear their abſence;—as they have never excited a vehement deſire,—they will never be the ſubject of exceſſive lamentations.

The moderate man is open to all thoſe arguments from religion and philoſophy—which may comfort him under temporal loſſes;

loſſes ;—he is ready to coincide with the wiſe ſchemes of Providence,—by reſigning that which God does not ſee convenient for him ; and to imitate angels in their beſt virtue,—obedience to the will of God.

Seventh

Seventh Day's Converſation.

PRUDENCE.

MAMA *and* MARY.

Mama. WELL, my dear Mary, are you not almoſt tired of our grave morning lectures?

Mary. I ſhould be alarmed for myſelf, my dear Mama, if I could ever be tired of receiving good advice and inſtruction, eſpecially yours.

Mama. That is handſomely ſaid, my dear, —and it gives great reaſon to hope, that you will not only hear it, but attend to it—and form your conduct by it.——A life that is ſpent without rule, and without a plan, cannot be a happy one;—perſons, who live in that manner, if they do right, they do it almoſt

almoſt without deſign—and I am afraid their doing evil, undeſignedly too—will be but a ſlender excuſe for them, when they ought to have conſidered and known the conſequence of her actions.

I wiſhed, as a Supplement to our yeſterday's converſation—to ſay—that there is a quality which is nearly allied to Moderation —though it is not exactly the ſame;—that is, Prudence,—and a more uſeful quality young perſons cannot have;——it is the guardian of Virtue and Happineſs.

How many perſons, who have never once deliberately intended to do ill, have been condemned,—deſpiſed,—and diſtreſſed—only for want of prudence——nay, ſometimes, only for want of prudence in ſome particular inſtance, which drew after it a train of conſequences.

One particular action, often influences the whole courſe of a man's circumſtances—turns his affairs into a particular channel—

and

and determines his lot for life;——it is of great conſequence, then, to "ponder the path of our feet, that all our ways may be well eſtabliſhed."

Circumſtances and events, which appear extremely diſtant—are ſo intertwined and mingled with each other—that when we once ſtep out of the path of prudence and diſcretion—we know not where we ſhall be led.

Mary. If I am ſo happy as to have your directions for all my conduct—I ſhall be in little danger of ſuffering by imprudence.

Mama. I am pleaſed, that you place ſo much confidence in me,—but my advice cannot be always at hand,—and indeed I ſhould wiſh ſometimes to ſee, that your acting properly, was the reſult of your own "ſound judgment and diſcretion."——In any thing of importance, I dare ſay, you would not chuſe to act without my concurrence,—but there are many leſſer occaſions,

in

in which, though imprudence may not bring after it ſuch ſerious conſequences—yet it produces little vexations and perplexities—which break very much in upon happineſs. ——That ſituation can never be pleaſant—in which you have occaſion to ſay,——"I wiſh I had not done this, or that;"—I mean when there is a conſciouſneſs that the acting otherwiſe might have been more diſcreet.

The beſt rule, therefore, in great, as well as ſmall matters, is—never to do that on which we cannot ſeriouſly bear our own judgment—not to follow the preſent inclination, when we have any ſuſpicion that it would be more proper to do otherwiſe.

In our general conduct,—prudence and diſcretion ſaves us from a thouſand mortifications and troubles that attend the inconſiderate man.

Some people have that giddy good humour, which makes them ready to join any party—to take a ſhare in any converſation—

or to acquieſce in any ſcheme;—ſuch perſons, though they may ſometimes be ſought after, can never be eſteemed, or reſpected,—their opinion can never be deciſive—their conduct can never be an example. They will be drawn into many difficulties and inconveniences—and often find reaſon to regret, that, at the expence of their judgment, they have followed their own inclinations, or complied with that of others.

Our own inclinations are very various—and the humours of others ſtill more ſo;—if, therefore, we do what we do not ſtrictly approve, to indulge ourſelves, or oblige others,—our deviations from rectitude will be innumerable—and the diſſatisfaction and uneaſineſs one feels upon ſuch occaſions, is a ſufficient admonition to us not to act ſo. ——I never allowed myſelf an afternoon's amuſement, when I knew I was neglecting ſomething that required my attention—or even exchanged one employment for another leſs uſeful or neceſſary,—without feeling

ing ſo diſſatisfied and uncomfortable—as to loſe the beſt part of the pleaſures I propoſed to myſelf.

Happineſs and rectitude are ſo connected, that we cannot deviate even in trifles from what is right and proper—without incurring ſome degree of pain and puniſhment for ſuch a deviation;—and we are ſo ignorant and uncertain, with reſpect to every event and incident that may happen—that we have no ſecurity for our future peace and content—but to act always the right and prudent part.

The ſpirit of a man may ſuſtain his infirmities,—"but a wounded ſpirit"—wounded with the reflection, that thoſe infirmities are the effect of his own miſconduct—"who can bear?"

Mary. But—Mama,—if people mean no harm——

Mama. Alas! my dear—people may do a great deal of harm without meaning it;—but the truth is—that a being, who is bleſſed with reaſon, ſhould never act without a a meaning.

If a light is held out to me—by which I might ſee round me,—and I will walk with my eyes ſhut, and ſo run againſt a poſt—though I might not mean to break my noſe, you will hardly think I deſerved to be pitied for doing it.

A prudent perſon, will conſider what is likely to be the conſequences of his actions—whether it might not be more wiſe and ſafe to do otherwiſe,—and by that means avoid bringing diſtreſſes upon himſelf and others,—which are not the leſs felt becauſe they were produced by inconſideration.

A prudent man has likewiſe the advantage of being always conſiſtent;——the ſame diſpoſition which leads him not to enter upon any action—or adopt any opinion, before he

he has thoroughly reflected upon it,—will likewiſe incline him to perſeverance and ſteadineſs, when once his plans are formed; —he will, therefore, always be found the ſame—unleſs when ſome weighty and important reaſon juſtifies a change;—and will obtain that confidence and eſteem which are never given to the capricious and inconſiſtent man;——for who will depend upon him, who cannot depend upon himſelf?—or what reſpect will be paid to the opinion or conduct of that man—who may adopt another opinion or conduct to-morrow?

Mary. Dear Mama—give me ſome rules for conducting myſelf with that prudence you recommend.

Mama. I have, my dear, adviſed you before never to act without conſideration,—nor can my advice be better expreſſed, than in that well-known ſentence:

"Whatſoever thou takeſt in hand, remember the end,—and thou ſhalt never do amiſs."

It is not poſſible to enumerate all the occaſions there may be for the exerciſe of prudence.——I cannot, however, forbear mentioning one inſtance,—in which it is particularly uſeful,—becauſe it is that, on which young and generous minds are leaſt apt to attend to its deciſion,——I mean in the choice of a friend.

Good young perſons—open and ſincere themſelves—and not having learnt by experience, that all are not ſo—are apt to be taken with the firſt appearance of amiable or virtuous qualities;—they wait not to examine, whether all be intrinſic, and uniform, —— but, having ſeen ſomething fair and engaging,—impute all the virtues and graces which they wiſh their new acquaintance to be poſſeſſed of,—and their imagination completes the character,—their time and their hearts are given up without reſerve to this favourite,—till a freer intimacy, and longer acquaintance—diſcover that they judged too haſtily;——they find

find the gay picture their fancy had drawn, is not like the original—and thus disappointed in their expectation—their friendship begins to decline;—it is well, indeed, if it be suffered quietly to expire,—and if some unhappy circumstance do not change the flame of friendship, into that of resentment.

The picture, however, still dwells on their imagination,—nor is it long before a casual glance persuades them that they have found one who perfectly resembles it;—their arms are again opened—and they meet with the same success.

When this has happened several times—a young person grows ridiculous,—her friendship and esteem become no longer valuable, when they are so easily removed or transferred—and she obtains the character of being capricious and fickle——when in reality her fault has been indiscretion—in forming a friendship before she was thoroughly acquainted

quainted with the temper and qualities of her, on whom ſhe conferred her regard.

Obſerve the wiſe man's rule :——"Be in peace with many—nevertheleſs have but one counſellor of a thouſand.——If thou would get a friend, prove him firſt, and be not haſty to credit him."

Avoid the charge of levity—and the pain of diſappointment—by making cautious advances towards an intimate friendſhip.

"Pauſe—ponder—ſift—not eager in the choice,
"Nor jealous of the choſen,—fixing—fix,
"Judge before friendſhip, then confide till death."

If you are ſo happy as to find that rare treaſure, a good faithful friend—one with whom you may go hand in hand in the paths of piety and virtue,—let no whimſical doubts—no haſty prejudices—rob you of it;—but then do not be proud of diſplaying your acquiſition to the world,—be content to keep the jewel for your own uſe—without oſtentatiouſly producing it—leſt you diſguſt

thoſe

thoſe on whom you do not appear to ſet ſo high a price,—and they be inclined either to depreciate its value, or to charge you with affectation.——And, indeed, with reſpect to every bleſſing, or advantage you have— it is the part of prudence "to bear your faculties meekly,"—and not to excite the envy of the world, by making a parade of your happineſs or ſuperiority.——But we muſt not paſs the whole morning in talking,—where is your book?

Eighth

Eighth Day's Converſation.

RELIGION.

MAMA *and* MARY.

Mama. MY dear Mary—I have been happy in ſeeing the affectionate attention you have given to my diſcourſes;——I hope you will not be unwilling to lend that attention to me a little longer.——I have engaged the young ones elſewhere, that we might not be interrupted.

I have, till now, my child, purpoſely avoided enlarging upon the joys of religion and piety,—becauſe I wiſhed, after we had conſidered all the ſubordinate means of happineſs—to fix your attention upon that—as the great object on which your thoughts ſhould delight to dwell—and from which you

you ſhould expect the pureſt—the moſt exalted—and the moſt permanent felicity.

All other things are only the probable means of happineſs,—ſecondary cauſes, by which we obtain ſome portion of that good which God has poured out on his creation; —but *Piety*, as it carries us directly to the throne of God—brings us at once to the great ſource of bliſs—and enables us to ſatisfy thoſe deſires, which no created good can fill.

Piety ſhews us ſome part of *his* glory, in whoſe "preſence is fulneſs of joy,"—and gives us ſome taſte of thoſe "rivers of pleaſure, which are at God's right hand for evermore."

Formed "after the image of him that created us"—and made to receive our happineſs from him—we feel within us, hopes and fears, and wants, which nothing in this world can ſatisfy or relieve.

Our

Our anxious and aſpiring hearts aſk a thouſand queſtions—form a multitude of wiſhes—and pant with a variety of terrors—which can receive ſatisfaction only by a voice from the mercy ſeat,

When labouring with ſuch perplexities, we enquire of the Lord, and ſay, Wherefore am I thus?

Piety will unfold to us the counſel of the Almighty,—will reſolve our doubts,—will direct our hopes to that immortality which alone can ſatisfy them,—and allay our apprehenſions, by a ſight of that croſs on which our divine Redeemer triumphed over all our enemies,—and took "out of the way all that was againſt us, or contrary to us, nailing it to his croſs."—It will guide us to that "anchor of the ſoul, ſure and ſtedfaſt," on which, amidſt all the fluctuating events of this life, we may repoſe,—and which will not be taken from us, till our veſſel is ſafely lodged

lodged in that haven of eternal reſt, where we would.

Mary. I feel myſelf pleaſed, my dear Madam, with the repreſentation you make,—and excited as far as my years are capable of it—to the love of piety and devotion.

Mama. If you ſincerely wiſh to ſeek God,—he who viſited "the child Samuel,"—and accepted the praiſe of babes—will draw your heart to him;—that Saviour, who embraced, and bleſſed the little children—will love you, and come unto you, and make his abode with you.——And at an age of more experience and acquirements—you will be equally unable of yourſelf to ſerve God acceptably;—it is his grace alone—which can direct your heart to the love of God;—the flame of religion can only be kindled by a coal from the altar.

But, under the name of Piety, I wiſh to comprehend much more than occaſional acts of prayer, or exerciſes of meditation.—Such piety as I would enforce—does not

 confine

confine itſelf to a houſe of prayer, or a book of devotion,—but knowing that God is every where preſent—and directs every event,—ſeeks him in all places—and acknowledges him in all occurrences;——ſhe is delighted, indeed, to converſe with God in ſolitude and privacy—but the preſence of crouds does not make her forget him.——Amidſt pomp and ſplendor—amidſt gaiety and greatneſs—her ſilent whiſper is, "whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I deſire in compariſon of thee."

Every circumſtance of her life ſhe refers to him—whom ſhe confides in, as her protector—her benefactor—her friend.

Is ſhe chearful?—is her mind attuned to notes of delight?—Gratitude to Heaven mingles with her ſongs of joy,——and ſhe "maketh melody in her heart to the Lord."

Is ſhe ſad?—are her ſpirits oppreſſed?—Clouds of ſorrow and diſtreſs hide not from her

her ſight the loving kindneſs of the Lord,—but in her "heavineſs ſhe thinks upon God."

Every action of common life ſhe ſanctifies into an act of Religion, by offering it firſt to God—upon the altar of an honeſt and ſincere heart.

Of this piety, the firſt and only ſure foundation is faith towards our Lord Jeſus, and a deep dependance on the all-atoning merits of that ſacrifice which the Saviour of men has offered unto God for you.——For what elſe could give you ſo much confidence towards God, as ſhould enable you to approach him as a father and a friend,—to repoſe all your deſires and wants upon him—and ſeek to him for counſel and ſecurity.

The more you learn to examine your own heart—the more you will find the deficiency of your beſt endeavours and pureſt performances, and the more you will ſee the neceſſity of having ſome better offering to preſent to God, in order to make him propitious

to you.——Trembling, and forlorn, muſt you ever have ſtood without the tabernacle, if you had not obtained "boldneſs to enter into the holieſt, by the blood of Jeſus."

Every preſent grace, and every future hope, you receive from him;—and if you are enabled to purſue ſuch a courſe of piety as I have been deſcribing, it is through his grace,—though not ſo as to preclude your own cares and endeavours.

Of ſuch a piety, my dear Mary, the joys are not to be deſcribed,—experience only can acquaint you with them;—and in order to make the bleſſed trial—you muſt learn to conſider the world—not as diſtinct from—but ſubordinate to—Religion.

Many perſons, who mean well,—think they have done their duty,—if, having conſecrated a cloſet—having built a little chamber in the wall to their Religion—they viſit her there at ſtated times—pay her reſpectful homage—and then take their leave of her,

till

till the next ſeaſon of attendance, to purſue the neceſſary employments,—and, as they ſuppoſe, innocent amuſements of life.

They even think it would be an affront to her—to make her their companion through all their courſe,—nor could their worldly or frivolous occupations abide the ſanctity of her preſence;——but this is not the deportment ſhe chuſes,—ſhe wiſhes to be uſed with leſs diſtance—and more attachment—to be treated like a friend,—venerable, indeed!—but beloved,—to be admitted into our domeſtic and ſocial circles,—to mix in our ſober recreations,—to be conſulted in all our tranſactions with the world;——ſhe expects, indeed, that her preſence ſhould reſtrain all unbecoming levity, and check the riſings of every unworthy paſſion,—but ſhe hopes that ſhe is able to make abundant amends for ſuch little ſacrifices—and to "put more gladneſs on the heart—than when corn, and wine, and oil encreaſes."

If you would be truly happy, and taſte all the delight that Religion is capable of conferring,—you muſt make her your conſtant companion, and chief counſellor,—join in no fellowſhip, where ſhe may not find a welcome—undertake no action which ſhe has not ſanctified with her approbation.

The Apoſtle's rule is, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do—do all to the glory of God;" and then, indeed, is your ſtate happy—when you perform every action—not with a view to gratify a particular humour, but becauſe it is your duty—becauſe you hope it will be acceptable to God, and in ſome way or other coincide with the wiſe and gracious plans of his providence.

That you may be able to do this with a ready and willing mind—you cannot too much endeavour to impreſs upon your mind a conviction, that every command of God, every law of your holy religion—is founded in wiſdom—truth, and mercy.

You

You will with more chearfulneſs obey the directions of God—when you conſider them —not as arbitrary commands—but as ſalutary laws, given to ſecure your own happineſs.——— "Fear hath torment," if you regard God as a deſpotic monarch, iſſuing out his injunctions—merely after "the pleaſure of his own will," becauſe he has power to enforce ſubmiſſion,—you will be too apt to pay a reluctant obedience,—you will be tempted to adjuſt too nicely the boundaries between ſin and duty, and to try how nearly you can approach to that which is forbidden, without incurring the penalties of diſobedience;—but when you are convinced, that his precepts are thoſe of an affectionate parent, who preſcribes them becauſe he knows they are good and profitable for you;—when you acknowledge, in his laws, the wiſdom of an omniſcient Legiſlator—whoſe commandments are pure—juſt—and holy,—how ready ought to be your compliance.—For, would you confeſs to yourſelf, that you are unwilling

ling to be guided by perfect rectitude?—and to conſult your own trueſt happineſs?

I am very far from meaning, that you ſhould preſumptuouſly enquire into the ways of God—or ſhould heſitate in your obedience to his law—becauſe the particular reaſon of it may not be obvious to you;——but ſince he himſelf condeſcends to appeal to his people—and to call upon them to judge "whether his ways be not equal,"—he will not be offended at a pious and humble ſtudy of his laws—in order to convince ourſelves, by the wiſdom, ſanctity, and juſtice, which we ſhall ſo often behold beaming forth in them—that every injunction is equally good,—is rich with the ſame treaſures—though their brightneſs is leſs viſible to us.

Theſe enquiries, indeed, and this ſtudy, cannot take place in the tumult and buſtle of the world;——and it is one of the greateſt advantages of the calm and temperate courſe of life, I have been recommending to you—

that

that it leaves the thoughts and heart at liberty to acquaint ourſelves with God.

In a more advanced age, care and engagements may preſs upon us—and the very duties of the ſtation to which God hath called, if we are not careful, eſtrange him from our thoughts.

But young perſons are without excuſe, if they are entangled in this world;—they voluntarily caſt themſelves into that net, into which others are unwarily drawn,—and when the nature of their ſituation would allow them time for reflection—whirl themſelves round till they are giddy.

Mary. I have often heard it ſaid—that youth was the ſeaſon for gaiety and pleaſure—and that *then* giddineſs was excuſable.

Mama. Thoſe who allow ſuch great privileges to youth,—ought to allow at leaſt as much to childhood;——yet it is generally thought proper that children ſhould be within

ſome

ſome limits—and ſome reſtraint ſhould be put upon their levity and ſportiveneſs—that they may be taught ſuch knowledge and qualifications, as it is ſuppoſed will be uſeful to them in their future life.

Youth, likewiſe, is a ſeaſon of preparation, —or preparation for "a long life, even for ever and ever."——It is during youth, that you muſt learn thoſe leſſons which ſhall make you "wiſe unto ſalvation;"——if, at that time—when your beſt, and moſt vigorous faculties may be exerciſed in this great work,—you neglect to begin—under pretence that youth is the ſeaſon for play—a thouſand dreadful contingencies may prevent your ever perfecting it.

It is to be lamented, that the world, and an intimate connection with the objects about us, teach us to conſider our part as finiſhed, and our ſcene of action cloſed by death. —— Death is only a point in our exiſtence—a ſtage in our journey, at which we lay down to reſt,—but ſhall find, when we awake, our ſituation

ſituation greatly affected by the progreſs we have made,—and the precautions we have uſed before.

There is a quotation in the Guardian on this ſubject, ſo beautiful and animating, that I muſt deſire you to learn it by heart:

"It is unworthy a Chriſtian Philoſopher to let any thing here below ſtand in the leaſt competition with his duty;—in vain is reaſon fortified by faith, if it produces in our practice no greater effects than what reaſon wrought on mere man.

"I contemn—(in dependance on the ſupport of Heaven I ſpeak it) I contemn all which the generality of mankind call great and glorious. I will no longer think or act as a mortal, but conſider myſelf as a being that commenced at my birth, and is to endure to all eternity.——The accident of death will not end, but improve my being; I will think of myſelf, and provide for myſelf,

myſelf, as an immortal; and I will do nothing now, which I do not believe I ſhall approve a thouſand years hence."

Govern yourſelf, my dear girl, by this beſt wiſdom,—ſo ſhall you be free from all thoſe doubts, diſtruſts, and ſelf-reproaches, which damp the pleaſures of the inconſiderate and vicious,—and receive from every innocent pleaſure an enjoyment—which can be taſted only—when "the Lord himſelf prepares our table."

Ninth Day's Converſation.

The foregoing ADVICE enforced.

MAMA *and* MARY.

Mama. HAVE you, my dear Mary, learned the paſſage in the Guardian, which I recommended to you.

Mary. I have, Madam; and I was endeavouring to recollect as much as I can of the Diſcourſes you have lately been ſo kind to hold with me.

Mama. I wiſh to ſpare your memory that trouble, and have therefore committed to writing our late Converſations—becauſe I thought it would be both uſeful and pleaſant to you to review them at leiſure.

On looking over them, I find I have ſaid ſome things, which may be rather above your comprehenſion at preſent,—but my ſubjects led me on; and, beſides, as the uncertainty of life makes it impoſſible for me to know how long I may be lent to you,—I wiſh to ſtore your mind with ſuch principles and inſtructions as ſhould be uſeful to you—when I might no longer be permitted to watch over your conduct;—and if you ſhould ever, in any way, be ſeparated from me——I hope you would conſider this little book, as your parent and friend,—ſtill talking with you,—and ſtill pointing you to the path of happineſs.

I might, my dear, certainly have put into your hands, many books—ſome particularly calculated for young perſons,—where you would find advice much ſuperior to mine,—or ſuch advice expreſſed in a ſuperior manner;——but they muſt all

all want a weight and recommendation, which, I truſt, your affection will give to this,—that of being dictated by the zeal and affection of a parent, ardently anxious for your preſent and future felicity.

If you do not diſcover in theſe writings the beams of genius,—you will at leaſt perceive the glowings of maternal love,—and your confidence in me will induce you to follow thoſe counſels on which I have aſſured you, ſo much depends.

I might have added more to the advice I have given you already,—and I hope ſtill to be able to do ſo;——but if you attend to the few counſels contained in this book—you will make a very conſiderable progreſs towards true happineſs.

Mary. I am ſure it ſhall be my conſtant endeavour;——but, Mama, we ſee

very few people govern themſelves by ſuch rules.

Mama. It is true, my dear ;—and we ſee very few people enjoy as much happineſs, as from circumſtances and ſituation they might. —— But becauſe many miſs this pearl of great price,—it is not for that reaſon the leſs worth ſeeking after.

In the lottery, you know, that great prizes become the property of but a few, —but that does not hinder you from wiſhing to become a candidate for them,— though the attainment depends on what is uſually called chance.

The ineſtimable prize of Happineſs has this advantage—that the attainment of it is in your own power ;——I do not mean, that you can be the author of your own happineſs.——Happineſs is the gift of God, and you cannot wreſt it out of his hands ; —but

—but that treaſure which we cannot ſeize, —he that hath the key of the houſe of David has procured us admiſſion to ;——it is the voice of the Son of God, which ſays, " Aſk and you ſhall receive."

If you, through Chriſt, ſincerely ſeek God, and apply to him for grace and protection,—he will give you thoſe diſpoſitions and virtues—to which—in the order of his providence—he has annexed—peace and comfort—and as much happineſs as can be enjoyed in this world,—a happineſs which is often heightened into rapture, by the proſpect of joy, unmixed and inexpreſſible, in the next.

This preſent happineſs,—this future joy, my dear child—is what I covet for you ;— and my ſeeing ſo many fall ſhort of it, appears ſo far from being a reaſon not to animate you towards the attainment of it,— that it is a motive with me to urge you more

more earneſtly, and to perſuade you more forcibly to endeavour after it.

If you ſhould be ſo unhappy as to fail of it,—your unfelicity will not be leſſened by the number of companions which you may have in miſery ;—beſides, of thoſe numbers, the errors may have many alleviations, which your's would not have.

To ſome, the right way may never have been ſhewn,—and others may have been but ſeldom invited to walk in it.

You have had it continually pointed out to you,—and have heard many a friendly voice ſay,—" This is the way,—walk you in it."

If, therefore, you wilfully go out of the road,—you have not thoſe mitigations of your fault, which others have, who have not been bleſſed with ſuch advantages as you have.——Improve thoſe advantages to your

your preſent and future comfort;——and may He — from whom every good gift cometh,—grant, that you may both perceive and know what things you ought to do,——and alſo give grace and ſtrength faithfully to fulfil the ſame.

F I N I S.